

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for embossing a ~~design~~ plurality of
separated three dimensional ornamental designs on a raw clay sidewall of a
pottery bowl, said apparatus comprising:
- a press block;
- a die block having a recessed die cavity in a shape of ~~the~~ a three dimensional
embossed ornamental design, a first one of the press and die blocks for positioning
adjacent an inner surface of the raw clay sidewall, and a second one of the press and
die blocks for positioning adjacent an outer surface of the raw clay sidewall opposite
the first one of the press and die blocks with the recessed die cavity of the die block
facing in a direction of the press block said die block being fabricated without a
movable central portion; and
- means for repeatably retractably urging the press and die blocks relatively
toward each other so as to press the press block against the raw clay sidewall and
plastically displace a portion of the raw clay sidewall into the recessed die cavity of
the die block to thereby produce ~~an~~ one of a plurality of a three dimensional
embossed portion of ornamental design portions on the raw clay sidewall which is
molded in a shape of the design.

1 2. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 1,

2 wherein the press block has an active press surface shaped to substantially
3 mate with the plurality of three dimensional recessed die cavity of the die block for
4 contactedly producing the plurality of three dimensional embossed ~~portion~~ ornamental
5 design portions ~~of~~ in the raw clay sidewall when repeatedly pressed thereagainst.

1 3. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 2,

2 wherein the press block has a passive press surface which is peripheral to the
3 active press surface and which is contoured to a corresponding one of the inner and
4 outer surfaces of the raw clay sidewall for providing support thereto during formation
5 of the embossed portion of the raw clay sidewall.

1 4. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 1,

2 wherein the press block has an active press surface for contactedly producing
3 the embossed portion of the raw clay sidewall when pressed thereagainst, and a
4 passive press surface which is peripheral to the active press surface and which is
5 contoured to a corresponding one of the inner and outer surfaces of the raw clay
6 sidewall for providing support thereto during formation of the embossed portion of the
7 raw clay sidewall.

5. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 4,

wherein the active press surface is shaped to substantially mate with the recessed die cavity of the die block.

6. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 1,

wherein the die block has a die block support surface which is peripheral to the recessed die cavity and which is contoured to a corresponding one of the inner and outer surfaces of the raw clay sidewall for providing support thereto during formation of the embossed portion of the raw clay sidewall.

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7. (Currently amended) An apparatus for embossing a design on a raw clay sidewall of a pottery bowl, said apparatus comprising:

a press block;

a die block having a recessed die cavity in a shape of the design, a first one of the press and die blocks for positioning adjacent an inner surface of the raw clay sidewall, and a second one of the press and die blocks for positioning adjacent an outer surface of the raw clay sidewall opposite the first one of the press and die blocks with the recessed die cavity of the die block facing in a direction of the press block;

means for retractably urging the press and die blocks relatively toward each other so as to press the press block against the raw clay sidewall and plastically displace a portion of the raw clay sidewall into the recessed die

13 cavity of the die block to thereby produce an embossed portion of the raw clay
14 sidewall which is molded in a shape of the design; and

15 wherein the means for retractably urging the press and die blocks relatively
16 toward each other comprises:

17 a pair of actuator arms operably connected to each other at a hinge joint, with
18 each actuator arm extending from the hinge joint to an output end which is connected
19 to a corresponding one of the press and die blocks; and

20 means for pivoting the pair of actuator arms about the hinge joint and
21 relatively toward each other.

22 8. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 7,

23 wherein the means for pivoting the pair of actuator arms comprises:

24 pneumatic means having a generally piston-cylinder configuration which
25 encloses a pressure chamber and which operably connects to the pair of actuator arms
26 at input portions thereof with the input portions spaced from the hinge joint and the
27 output ends, for exerting an equal and opposite input force on the input portions due
28 to displacement of the piston to an equilibrium position when compressed air is
29 introduced into the pressure chamber;

30 a compressed air source; and

31 means for delivering compressed air from the compressed air source to the
32 pressure chamber.

33 9. (Original) The apparatus as in Claim 8,
34 wherein the pressure chamber comprises first and second sub-chambers which
35 are divided by a piston head of the piston, and the means for delivering compressed
36 air includes a first air line to the first sub-chamber and a second air line to the second
37 sub-chamber, and

38 further comprising valve means for adjustably varying the pressure of the
39 compressed air delivered to each of the first and second sub-chambers so as to
40 produce a pressure differential on opposite sides of the piston head for controlling the
41 degree of piston displacement and resulting input force.

1 10. (Original) A method for embossing a design on a raw clay sidewall of a
2 pottery bowl, said method comprising the steps of:

3 providing a press block and a die block, with the die block having a recessed
4 die cavity in a shape of the design;

5 positioning a first one of the press and die blocks alongside an inner surface of
6 the raw clay sidewall;

7 positioning a second one of the press and die blocks alongside an outer surface
8 of the raw clay sidewall opposite the first one of the press and die blocks, with the
9 recessed die cavity of the die block facing in a direction of the press block;

10 urging the press and die blocks relatively toward each other so as to press the
11 press block against the raw clay sidewall and plastically displace a portion of the raw
12 clay sidewall into the recessed die cavity of the die block to thereby produce an

13 embossed portion of the raw clay sidewall which is molded in the shape of the design;
14 and
15 retracting the press and die blocks from the raw clay sidewall.

1 11. (Original) The method as in Claim 10,
2 further comprising the step of providing a pair of actuator arms operably
3 connected to each other at a hinge joint, with each actuator arm extending from the
4 hinge joint to an output end which is connected to a corresponding one of the press
5 and die blocks, and
6 wherein the step of urging the press and die blocks relatively toward each
7 other includes pivoting the pair of actuator arms about the hinge joint and relatively
8 toward each other.

12. (Original) The method as in Claim 11,
wherein the step of pivoting the pair of actuator arms includes exerting an
equal and opposite input force on the pair of actuator arms at input portions thereof
which are spaced from the hinge joint and the output ends.

13. (Original) The method as in Claim 12,
wherein the input force is pneumatically exerted by delivering compressed air
to a pressure chamber of a piston-cylinder configuration operably connected to the
input portions to thereby displace the piston to an equilibrium position.

1 14. (Original) In a pottery bowl having a sidewall with opposing first and second
2 sidewall surfaces, the improvement comprising:

3 a plastically-displaced embossed portion of the sidewall having a raised surface
4 region in bas-relief from the first sidewall surface, and an indented surface region
5 opposite the raised surface region which is recessed from the second sidewall surface,
6 at least one of the raised and indented surface regions having a shape of a pre-
7 determined design impressed thereon when the raised and indented surface regions
8 were simultaneously formed by plastic displacement caused by a displacement force
9 exerted against the second sidewall surface toward the first sidewall surface while
10 previously in a pliable raw condition.

15. (Original) The improved pottery bowl as in Claim 14,

 wherein each of the raised and indented surface regions have the shape of the
pre-determined design impressed thereon and substantially contoured to each other.